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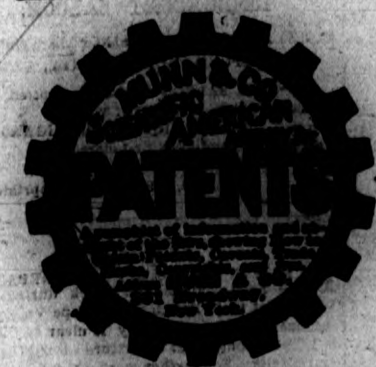
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SPORT OF THE ESKIMO.

The Men Like to Gamble, Wrestle, Tell Stories, Sing and Dance.

Next to gambling the Eskimo men like to wrestle. The usual way of doing this is a test rather of strength than skill. The wrestlers sit down on the floor, or in any convenient place, side by side, and facing in opposite directions, say, with their right elbows touching. Then they look arms, and each strives to straighten out the other's arms. As the match is usually made bare-armed they not infrequently peel up the skin in the struggle. In the old days when a stranger arrived at a settlement he was invited to wrestle in some way with a villager, and the winner was allowed to kill the loser if he chose to do so.

If less exciting, story-telling is really almost as common for an evening's diversion as gambling, says a writer in the New York Sun. The Eskimo traditions are told over and over again. Everyone knows them word for word, and should the relater omit or add a single syllable he would be corrected instantly by some one of the audience. There is nothing like these recitals in America, except in the work, so called, of certain secret societies, where precisely the same care in repetition is exacted. The relater of the story sits at one side of the room, and, averting his head, turns his face toward the wall away from the audience before he begins. There is no applause during the recital nor when he is finished. There are traditions that relate to the early Norse settlers of Greenland, to the origin of the seal and other valuable animals, to the red Indians of North America, beside many stories of love and valor that seem to have no great value to ethnologists, though very interesting as specimens of what may be called the literature of peculiar people.

The native songs are scarcely less musical, though the Eskimo voice is naturally sweet and fine. The native tunes are monotonous chants, but the Eskimo readily learns the tunes of the whites. In his first village party two good violins, three or four concertinas, and some French harmonicas, most of them out of order, but the skill of the owners of those that were in order was equal to that of the best musicians to be found at rural dances in Yankee land.

The Eskimos like the reels better than any other forms of dances, and all, old and young, dance with zest and abandon that is inspiring to the spectator. Under the Danish Lutheran teaching this form of amusement has been in no wise discouraged, but the Moravians believed dancing a sin and held up the horrors of hell before the unfortunate merry-makers. Some have believed the Moravian story, and to the depressing influences by which they are surrounded add fear of future torment as a reward for wishing to join the sports of their light-hearted neighbors. Many, indeed, forsake the Moravian teachers, but are then forever haunted by the fear that the doctrine of a vengeful God may be true after all.

Men and boys play ball, and the two games most popular, if combined, would not vary greatly from Yankee football. The ball is made of stout seal leather, filled sometimes with sand and clay and sometimes with moss. It is sewed up with seal sinews, and is sometimes ornamented with tufts or tassels and a zone made of strings of seal leather with the hair on. The players divide into two parties always chosen up, as Yankee boys would say. Then in one game one side tosses the ball about, while the other tries to capture it; in the other one side tries to kick the ball over a wide space to a goal, while the other tries to capture and hit the goal with it instead. Sometimes they bat it in the latter game instead of kicking it.

Over on the west side of Baffin's bay the Eskimos have in winter a house in every village set aside for feasts and dances. It is dome-shaped, and about twenty feet in diameter by fifteen high. Here the entire populace gathers. The married women stand in a row next to the wall, the unmarried women stand next to them, while the men form a third ring inside of the rest. The children of all who are under twelve years, form two groups near the entrance. Then the feast begins, and hotted meat and soup, with raw seal liver, are passed around as long as any one can eat. This done, a man strips to the waist, takes a drum made something like a tennis bat covered with raw seal skin, and stepping into the center of the ring begins to sing, and dance, and beat the drum. The words of the song are improvised by the singer and are usually satirical. He praises first one and then another of the company for good qualities that are noticeably lacking, to the great delight of all the rest, though they know that they will be scored if they have not already been. The dancing is simply a stamping of the feet and a swaying of the body—the motion is ridiculous to any one not an Eskimo. The women join in the chorus, but the men listen in silence.

A woman once consulted a seer regarding a way to retain the affection of her husband, and this was the advice received: "Get a raw piece of best seal skin, about half an inch thick. Rub with a central slice from a wild onion, salt and pepper. Toast over a bright coal fire on a gridiron which is handled only by yourself, never by your servants; then put a little sweet butter over the beef. Give him half a pound of this each morning and do not speak while he eats it."

THE "SPOTTER" NECESSARY.

A General Passenger Agent Talks About the Conductor's Plain.

"It seems natural that all persons engaged in handling money should object to being watched," said General Passenger Agent East of the Burlington to a Chicago News reporter. "But what other system can be employed to do away with the railroad 'spotter'?" The latter is just as necessary an adjunct to the operation of a railroad as he is to the federal government. We must be protected from unscrupulous employees."

Mr. East's remarks were called forth by a dispatch which told how the conductors in conversation assembled at St. Louis had denounced the "spotter" system as unnecessary and an outrage upon the hard-working ticket puncher. "This is a mistaken idea the public has in thinking that a railroad detective is obliged to prove a certain number of employees are dishonest in order to show that he is doing his work. In reality it is just the reverse. The conductors who make the greatest clamor about the 'spotter' gradually come to realize the necessity of their presence. A detective never reports that a 'certain employee is dishonest.' He has nothing to do with that at all. In sending his report the spotter merely states that a person boarded the train and sat in a certain seat in the car (the detective) was seen, and that the passenger gave the conductor some cash and left the train at such or such a station. This report is then compared with the conductor's."

"This constitutes the work of a detective. A conductor is only dismissed when his shortage continues several months in succession. We had in our employ a short time ago a conductor who was constantly declaiming against the secret-service system. In one of the meetings of the 'Q' conductors this man made a number of very stirring speeches against the spotter. After the meeting had adjourned I asked him to stop into my office. He did so, and I pointedly told him we would not allow any more of his stirring speeches that he must stop such work. He at first appeared deeply hurt at the imputation, but when I produced the reports and showed him that we had evidence that he was dishonest he weakened and promised to reform. Since then his reports have invariably tallied with those of the detectives. No, the secret-service system must be employed, and honest men, while they dislike the idea, have come to look at it in the true light and accept it as one of the inevitables."

OPPOSED TO BEDS.

People Who Sleep on the Floor, in Chairs, or Standing Up.

Several persons, from some cause or other, have resolved at various periods not to sleep in bed. Perhaps the individual who kept to his resolution the longest, says Spare Moments, was Christopher Pevitt, of York, who died in 1796, aged ninety-three. He was a carver and gilder by trade, but during the earlier part of his life served in the army. His house at York, after he had settled down, was accidentally burned down, and he therefore formed the singular resolution of never again sleeping in a bed, lest he should be burnt to death while asleep, or not have time, should such a misfortune again befall him, to remove his property. The resolution he rigidly kept for the last forty years of his life, his practice being to repose on the floor, or on two chairs, or sitting in a chair, but always with his clothes on. He lived entirely alone and was his own housekeeper, and seldom admitted anyone into his habitation. Among other articles which composed his home was a human skull, which he left strict injunctions should be interred with him.

A pedestrian named Ernest Menden, who flourished in the third decade of this century and who once ran from Calcutta to Constantinople in fifty-nine days when employed as a courier, took very little rest and never slept in a bed when on his travels. He got short naps of only ten or fifteen minutes at a time each day, and when he could, and took them standing or leaning against a tree, with a handkerchief over his face. Only the other day a man on being charged with begging declared that he had not slept in a bed for thirty years, but took his night's rest in doorways and passages.

The Japanese never sleep in a bed, but the same position floor that answers for table, chairs and dancing stage is utilized also for sleeping purposes. They sleep in a great wadded coat, and putting their arms into the long sleeves, fold it over them and go to sleep upon the floor, with a block of wood placed under the neck for a pillow. Perhaps the strangest sleeping place was one discovered a few years ago, when the police of Budapest found thirty persons of both sexes lying in a dirty but warm stream of water that flowed out of a mill. The water was shallow, and the vagrants had got into it for warmth, taking stones for pillows.

An Indian Myth.

It is stated in the mythology of India that an immense spider was the origin of the universe and the first cause of all things. Drawing the material from its own bowels it wove the web of creation. Sitting in the center of its work it feels and directs the motion of every part, until at length, when it has pleased itself sufficiently in ordering and contemplating its perfection, it will draw all the threads it has spun out again into itself and, when they have been absorbed, everything will have vanished into nothing.

IMAGINARY HUNGER.

Strange Influence of a Watch Used a Man's Appetite.

I was engaged during the morning in preparing part of an interesting chapter in my new work. The one, in fact, which deals with the origin and development of the human race, says a writer in the Boston Post. I had got as far as the head-dress worn by the Athenian matrons to the theater, and was naturally much engrossed with the work, when an inward monitor, in a still, small, but yet unmistakable voice suggested "lunch." I looked at my watch—it said three o'clock.

Now, I always take luncheon at 1:30, never, in any emergency, later than two. But three o'clock! I felt ill and faint. I started for the club feeling like Rip Van Winkle, when he came home for his lunch twenty years late. I passed a friend; I tried to alk with him, but he did not seem to be looking upon me sadly and askance as if I were in some way a stricken wether of the flock. I went in and sat down. Somehow everybody else seemed to be late. I looked at the clock, it was exactly 1:30. I looked at my watch again. It still said three o'clock. It had stopped during the night. Now mark the result. I instantly recovered from the starvation from which I had been suffering, and began to converse in my usual cheerful and intelligent manner. But I did not mention the extraordinary behavior of my watch, which I now reveal only in strict confidence.

British Maps.

British fondness for territory is illustrated very graphically in a well-known pocket atlas published by an English firm. British possessions are all printed in a brilliant shade of red, but the world is a large place, and even the numerous colonies of the little Isle fall to make as great a show as was desired, so Grant Land, the great continent of rock and ice lying north of the arctic circle, and Graham Land, a similar tract south of the antarctic circle, were also printed in a rosy hue. These desolate wastes are undefined and unexplored, and of about as much use as the milky way. Certainly no nation will dispute Britannia's right to paint them red if she wants to.

Cleverly Turned.

At Oxford some twenty years ago a tutor of one of the colleges limped in his walk. Stopping one day at a railway station some years afterward he was accosted by a well-known politician, who recognized him and asked if he was not the chaplain of the college at such time, naming the year. The doctor replied that he was. "I was there," said his interrogator, "I knew you by your limp." "Well," said the doctor, "it seems my limping made a deeper impression on you than my preaching." "Ah, doctor," was the reply, "it is the highest compliment you can pay a minister to say he is known by his walk rather than by his conversation."

A Watchmaker's Tradition.

There is a tradition among watchmakers that prior to the year 1870 all clocks and watches were made with IV, the proper characters to mark four o'clock. In that year a clock was made for Charles V. of France, who was not only a crank, but a great fault-finder. The clock was a beauty, but Charles had to find fault. He examined it critically and finally broke out in a storm of rage because the hour four had been marked "IV," insisting that IIII's should be put on instead. This was done, and in order to perpetuate a king's mistake has been kept up ever since.

A Cool Engineer.

A cool headed engineer prevented a disastrous collision near West Point, Miss., the other day. The telegraph operator neglected to hold a freight train as directed, and it was pulling out of the station when a passenger train was discovered rounding a curve at the rate of fifty miles an hour. The engineer of the freight jumped, making no effort to stop his engine. The engineer of the passenger train, however, brought his train to an abrupt standstill. Leaping from the cab he jumped on the freight engine and stopped the train just two feet from his own.

Coin of Brass and Tin.

When England was being made into mince meat and blocks of real estate by the Saxons and Danes, silver and brass were in use as currency, but the Normans subsequently installed the aristocratic metal and left the democratic brass to take care of itself. Gold was first coined by Henry III., and copper made into British coin in 1073. Tin was used for coinage in 1680, and the national farthing was made of this Cambrian product with a stand of copper jet in the center. In 1680 and 1691 tin half-pence were issued in considerable quantities. The only pure gold coins issued in English history were those of Henry III.

Living Without Working.

It is said that between the island of Madagascar and the coast of India there are sixteen thousand islands, only six hundred of which are inhabited. In any of these islands a man can live and support his family in princely luxury without working more than twenty-five days in the year. In fact, on some of these islands he needn't work at all, as nature provides the food, and no clothes are required.

THE NEGRO'S SONG.

It Breathes a Sadness Induced by the Wrong His Race Has Borne.

No Other Music Can Match It in Melancholy Sweetness, and It Was the Only Thing That Slavery Left Him—Reason for Its Excellence.

Ninety years ago in a little grass-matted hut beside the Niger river a white traveler lay tossing in the agonies of a tropical fever. Sometimes in his delirium he murmured broken fragments of Scottish songs—sometimes, as the pangs of the fever momentarily abated, to ring in his ears, soft, sweet, to semi-consciousness by the sweet lilting, the sick man would rise from his couch of reeds and cry: "Play the 'Blue Belle of Scotland,' pipers—play the 'Blue Belle.'"

Then a woman, dark of face, and clad only in a blue cotton skirt, entered the hut. Sitting down beside the invalid she began to softly croon a song of wondrous melody. In the music of that African song pathetic, sympathy and anxiety seemed to blend with hope and confidence, while the sound, ever soft and low, touched gently the ears of the sufferer, and soothed him to rest and sleep, from which he awoke, weak, but free from the fever's grasp.

That traveler, says the Chicago Globe, was Mungo Park. In his memoirs he says: "I am firmly convinced that the soft music of that negro woman's song saved my life and gave me new strength for my undertaking."

How or when the negro acquired his love of music history cannot tell. Herodotus tells of the "sounding bows" of the Ethiopians—black bows whose strings gave out a melody sweeter than the notes of lyre or others, and which were in great demand at festivals. In Roman times the Mauritanian blacks were noted for their musical skill, and the chroniclers of the middle ages often speak of the sable musicians who delighted the lordly Saracens with their talent. In the strange, mysterious land of Africa the negro has little to do and abundance wherewith to support life. Doubtless, in the earlier ages, he lounged about his hut day after day, until at last from sheer ennui, he turned to music as a means of employing his idle time. As the centuries rolled on the black became more and more skilled in musical art until, when his race first began to see the shores of America, he was already a vocal and instrumental genius of high merit.

But it was among the negro slaves that the "divine art" reached its perfection. The poor African, torn from his native land, and sent from case and idleness to hard work, under an exacting master, could not express his thoughts in the ordinary language of common conversation, but all the pathos, all the sorrow of his misfortune and his surroundings, acting upon his sensitive and romantic nature, combined to produce a type of song which the world has never seen surpassed. Perhaps a wife or child would be sold into servitude, far away from the poor slave who composed the song; perhaps a kindly master would pass beyond death's river; perhaps the slave himself would be sent into a distant state, never again to see the home which had become dear to him by countless ties, but, whatever the cause, the negro songs remain matchless in their melancholy sweetness, marvelous in their patient resignation to fate and "masses" will.

But there were gleams of light and happiness in the life of the slave. In the evening, when the work was over, the darkies would assemble in the "quarters" and, while the "possum and the hoe cake, the sweet potatoes and the corn were being cooked to perfection by the skillful "aunties," the fiddle and the banjo sounded merrily and the uproarious chorus mingled with the shuffle of the dancing feet.

From these festive occasions sprang the idea of negro minstrelsy, which has since become so distorted that not one person in fifty north of Mason and Dixon's line has any idea of real plantation music or of the real depth and richness of those unique and matchless melodies. Since the war the negro has been free, but he has not forgotten his music, and he, and his descendants, even those in whose veins lingers hardly a drop of negro blood, still sing the songs that once delighted "young masses" and rose sadly around "old masses' grave." But even among the negroes there was a great variety of music, tinged by locality, of course, and often by the ancestral tribe of the negro. Thus, in New Orleans the blacks had a list of songs much different from the music of Virginia or the Carolinas. The songs of Carolina dwell upon cotton lands and rice fields; those of Louisiana less upon material surroundings and more upon sentiment and love.

Much French blood ran in the veins of these people and their music showed the combination of races. Even now, in Louisiana, the creole women—women of whom a southerner once said that they were the most beautiful in the world—the quadroons and octoroons, chant their songs and lullabies in both French and English, and the mellow accent of the negro tongue yet clings to every melody, in either language.

The south may change as the years pass by; the negro may be blonded with the white, and lost from view in the millions who will yet people that lovely southern land, but the songs of slavery, the wondrous expressions of all the music of a hapless race, will live forever and be sung in future ages by men and women who can claim no trace of African lineage, and who will remember nothing of the sable composers, save the song.

Not to Be Blinded.

A merchant in Syracuse offered a young woman twenty yards of silk for a dress if she would sew half a cord of wood in front of his store. She borrowed a saw, split on her hands, and went through that woodpile in just three hours, and the admiring crowd gave her a twelve-dollar hat to go with the dress.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE.

Inhabitants of a Drop of Water Described by a Red-headed Man.

"You asked me the other day why I entertained such a prejudice against water," said a gentleman with a toddy-blossom on the end of his nose to a Washington Star reporter. "If you will kindly gaze through this microscope I shall be able to explain without having recourse to wordy argument. I will take a drop of water from the tap here at the washstand. There! You observe I let it fall upon this little piece of glass. It is ready now for examination under the instrument, which I adjust to a high power. Let us see if, in swallowing this pure Potomac fluid which the people of Washington are obliged to consume, they do not imbibe very many extraordinary and uninviting creatures. Let us turn the reflector a little. Now there is a cheerful specimen right in the field of vision. Apply your eye to the microscope and drink him in, in imagination. Isn't he lovely?"

"That, my dear sir, is a beast known scientifically as the 'bomina longirostris.' The latter part of its name signifies long-beaked. Observe the coquetish pose of its hind leg. You drink lots of those fellows every day at meals. Let me move the glass a trifle, so as to bring into view another part of the drop. There are two rather unpleasant-looking fellows for you."

"That wormlike one, which you see squirming around in a transparent sea as if anxious to get out, is called an 'angulilla.' Cyclops is the name of the other, which resembles a young six-legged baby somewhat, I think. It is young, too, being newly hatched; but it will grow much bigger, which is a comfort. You yourself consume ever so many such."

"But look here! Now that I have moved the glass a trifle the other way, I have brought into view still another part of the drop, in which you may see scurrying the 'cyclops quadricornis,' so-called because it is a one-eyed monster, with four horns and ten legs. Take a look at him."

"I won't bore you with any more just now, but I could show you more than two hundred species of microscopic creatures in the water, each of them with a scientific name of its own. I might mention, for example, the vorticella of formidable jaws; the ciliatium, precisely the shape of a pair of cow's horns; several species of hydra, with waving tentacles; and the 'amphora grigas' in the shape of an ornamental letter O. There are no end of things which these creatures imitate in form. One looks like a fish, but is not. Another resembles a broom, still another a coal scoop, and so on ad infinitum."

"Now, it is all very well for persons who are not acquainted with these things to drink water, but a microscopist like myself ought to know better. And when you consider the disease germs, like those of typhoid, which are so apt to haunt this fluid, you cannot but realize the desirability of avoiding it as I do."

FETTERED VOLUMES.

Libraries Wherein the Books Are Secured by Chains.

In Europe, long before the days of printing, books were fastened to shelves or desks in libraries and churches, to guard against their being stolen, and also to prevent one student gaining an unfair advantage over another by securing the loan of a book from a too amiable librarian.

The libraries of the English universities were chained until the latter part of the eighteenth century, when, on account of the inconvenience of using them, the chains were removed. It is recorded that at King's college a man was paid one pound and seven shillings, in 1777, for nine days' labor in taking the fetters off the college books. According to the Antiquarian, there are, however, a few chained libraries still remaining in England. The largest of these is at the cathedral church of Hereford, and is the one genuine survival of an old monastic library. It consists of about two thousand volumes, of which fifteen hundred are chained. There are five bookcases, and the remains of two others.

The catalogue, which is also chained, classifies the books, many of which are in manuscript, in eight divisions. Each chain is from three to four feet long, according to its position, so that every volume can be placed on the reading desk. In the center of these chains are swivels, which are useful in preventing their entanglement.

Hereford possesses the latest, as well as the oldest collection of chained books in the kingdom, the library of two hundred and eighty-five volumes, which was bequeathed to All Saints' church.

THE BIGGEST OF FLYING BIRDS.

The Wandering Albatross and the South American Condor Are the Ones.

The biggest of all really powerful flying birds are, I believe, the wandering albatross and the South American condor—for the roo I reject outright as worthy only of the most restricted Arabian and nocturnal ornithology. Seen on the wing, says a writer in the Chicago Globe, or even with the wings expanded merely, both these great existing birds have a most majestic and colossal appearance. But feathers in such cases are very deceptive; they make fine birds out of very small bodies. For example, our well-known little English swift, which looks so imposing in flight as it passes overhead with pinions poised, is hardly as big when plucked as a man's top thumb joint and weighs only half an ounce. So, too, the albatross, though its expanse of wing is said to exceed that of any other known bird, amounting sometimes to nearly ten feet from tip to tip, does not average in weight more than fifteen pounds, which is just exactly the poultryer's statement for my last family Christmas turkey. As for the condor, while he spans from wing to wing some eight feet, his length from beak to tail is only three and a half, and I doubt if he would pluck into anything corresponding to his magnificent outer show—though I am bound to admit that I have never personally tried the unpleasant experiment.

CHURCH CHOIRS.

Some of the Impediments to Which They Are Compelled to Submit.

Church quartettes have long been considered the lawful prey of the overworked paragonist. The soprano and tenor are always grumped together, while the alto and bass are invariably paired in an antagonistic attitude toward the other couple. The equilibrium of harmony is recognized even by the paragonist. This does not lessen the fact that church choirs have real grievances to which they must submit. One is the gratuitous work they are called upon to perform in singing at funerals. The members of a church choir are paid a certain yearly income for singing a certain number of times in church on Sundays. It is taken for granted that the choir will cheerfully acquiesce in the suggestions that it volunteer its aid for all the church entertainments where music is a feature. And it is taken for granted that the musical notes furnished are non-negotiable. This is simply looked upon by the thrifty trustees as obtaining good measure, pressed down and running over, for the money paid the choir. But when the singers are asked to attend the funeral of some church member, whose very likely they did not know, and sing three or four numbers without as much as receiving thanks, it is nothing more or less than an imposition. The male members of the choir are called away from their business to chant pathetic lays over the remains of one in whom they had not the slightest personal interest, yet because the deceased was in the habit of listening to their voices every Sunday, they are expected to feel amply compensated by the satisfaction they derive from doing an act of charity. This dead-head work which church choirs, for obvious reasons, are compelled to perform is not specified in the contracts and cannot be fairly included in the salaries paid for singing in church, yet it is a fact that the singers are seldom paid for the professional services they render at funerals.—Chicago News.

PAUPERS OF FINLAND.

The Horrible Custom of Selling Them Is Nearly Abolished.

A year ago, says the Helsinki correspondent of the London News, I mentioned the peculiar mode Finland has of dealing with its paupers and aged, and am glad to be able to say that a great deal has since been done to get the inhuman practice of selling the poor creatures by auction abolished. The government has been awakened to the fact that the practice is barbarous and entirely out of accord with the otherwise cultivated institutions of Finland. An instance of the dreadful manner in which these creatures are held may be recorded. A very old woman, sick and weary of life, almost too feeble to exist longer, had been sold to a farmer. Her term was up last Wednesday, when she had to be resold. It was an exceedingly cold day and a fearful snowstorm was raging. The poor old creature knew that she could not live over the night, so she asked her owner if he would allow her to die in her corner, where she would be as quiet as possible and give no trouble and not eat anything. She begged hard, but her request was not granted, and she was sent out to the auction. The price paid for her was very low, poor thing, for every one knew that she could not last long. After the sale was over and the buyers were preparing to take home their purchases the old woman was found dead. She had kept her word. She had been no trouble to anyone, but had died without a murmur.

PROFITABLE PROFESSIONS.

Here Are Two That Pay Better Than Law or Medicine.

In discussions and articles on "The Choice of a Profession" two of the most lucrative professions of all have generally been forgotten. These are the professions of a jockey and "strong man." At a festive meeting, viz., the annual dinner of the Jockey club, a former steward of the Jockey club said: "Cases now exist where a jockey receives a salary equal to that of a secretary of state, and jockeys even of the second rank receive, I think, payments which place them in a position, from a financial point of view, considerably ahead. I may say, of the bulk of their employers."

Besides these salaries (or retainers, as they are called) the jockeys receive the authorized and regular riding fees, and it is no exaggeration, affirms the Pall Mall Gazette, to say that at the present moment at least half a dozen of them are earning, in connection with their riding, in the shape of retainers, riding fees and presents, £25,000 a year apiece, and in one or two cases even more.

With reference to the earnings of "strong men," Sandow is reported to have said, in connection with the contest in which he took part recently, that by his defeat he lost more than £4,000, the savings of only two years. If these statements are facts, and there is no reason to doubt that they are, we need not wonder at the large number of would-be "strong men" and jockeys.

Diseases From Clothing.

There is probably no custom which lends itself more readily to the propagation of infectious disease than the household manufacture of articles of clothing. Every physician whose duty calls him to the homes of the working poor must have been struck with this fact. In many cases it could not well be otherwise under existing conditions. The two or three available apartments are occupied by a fairly numerous family, and a separate workroom would be regarded not unreasonably as a needless concession to personal comfort. Thus it happens that the same chamber in a "sweater's" tenement, say, the same bed, often contains the sufferer from scarlatina or measles and the coat and vest which next week will adorn the window of some tailor. Disinfecting? Probably not, unless under pressure of some external authority, for the class of workers to whom we have referred too often exhibits surprising ignorance or carelessness with regard to the properties of contagion.—N. Y. Ledger.

ODD EXPERIENCES OF TRAVEL.

A Lady Tells of Some Odd Adventures in Oriental Lands.

Tips and gentilizations go a great way in making foreign servants understand those who do not speak their language, but they do not always succeed, and threesome though amusing adventures are often the result, says Mrs. Davis Ker in the New York Epoch.

When we first traveled in India we knew very little Hindoostanee, and on arriving at a palatial but very comfortable hotel at Jubbulpore I wanted a small pitcher of hot water to bathe a hurt on my little finger. We knew that chota was "small," and garrum "warm," but we could not think of the Hindoostanee for "water." At last I thought I had made the bearer understand what I wanted. After waiting some time he returned looking well pleased with himself at so easily guessing my wishes, and placing a small cup of tea at my side, bowed profoundly, and was about to leave the room, when I called him back and tried again to explain.

This time we had to wait still longer, but presently we heard a thumping on the stairs and a deal of gasping and groaning, and then three men appeared carrying a most enormous cushion of boiling water.

Our next journey was to Allahabad, and on reaching the station at dawn we hired a carriage and told the coachman in our best Hindoostanee to drive to the nearest hotel. We soon stopped at the entrance of a large house, and a well-dressed European opened the carriage door for us and politely helped us out.

"I am glad you have come so early," he said, "for you will have plenty of time to see everything, and I assure you I can show you some very handsome pieces of furniture. What will you look at first?"

"After traveling all night we are too tired and dusty and hungry to look at anything at present," I answered sharply, "but will you show us into the best bedroom you've got and send us some breakfast immediately?"

The man stared at me in utter astonishment and turned to Mr. Ker for an explanation. After a time we found out our mistake. The house was not a hotel, but a private residence, and the furniture was about to be sold at auction. The European, whom we had mistaken for the hotel manager, was the auctioneer. So our Hindoostanee had been again at fault.

In West Africa I twice quite unintentionally offended the natives most grievously. Directly a steamer arrived at a port the negroes swarmed around her in canoes, offering skins, grass mats, etc., for sale, and I always took this opportunity of sketching them. Once one of the men was very extraordinary, and in my anxiety to have a good look at it I must have let my drawing block and pencil be seen, for he caught sight of what I was doing, and, tearing off his wig in terror, he called out wildly: "No put me in book, white man! No good man! No put me in book!"

He evidently thought that I was working some evil spell over him.

Another time an Ashantee woman on our steamer saw me sketching her, and she complained most bitterly to the captain that I had made her very ill. She said that I had given her a frightful pain in her head and that she had to lie down all the afternoon.

But I think the funniest thing that ever happened to me was at Old Calabar. We had sent our clothes to be washed there, and when the washerwoman brought them back she coolly told me that she had kept one or two of my garments, for she liked them so much that she could not part with them. She asked me what she should give me for them. I told her I could not possibly sell my underclothing as curiosities. However, she got them for nothing, for our steamer was just sailing for England, so I had no means of insisting upon their return.

A SAGACIOUS MONSTER.

An Elephant That Could Count Twenty and Would Stand No Deduction.

Arthur Clay sends to the London Spectator the following instance of the sagacity of the elephant. It was told me, he says, by Mr. Quay—at the time a non-commissioned officer in the First battalion of the Sixth rifle, but now one of her majesty's yeomen of the guard. In 1883 his regiment was marching from Peshawar to Kopelvie, and was accompanied by a train of elephants. It was the duty of the mahout in charge of each elephant to prepare twenty chupatties, or flat cakes made of coarse flour, for his charge. When the twenty chupatties were ready they were placed before the elephant, who during the process of counting never attempted to touch one of them until the full number was completed. On the occasion related by Mr. Quay one of the elephants had gained the opportunity of his mahout's attention being distracted for a moment to steal and swallow one of the chupatties. When the mahout, having finished the preparation, began to count them out, he of course discovered the theft and presented his charge with nineteen in place of the usual number. The elephant instantly appreciated the fact of there being one less than he had a right to expect, and refused to touch them, expressing his indignation by loud trumpeting. This brought the conductor of the elephant line (with whom Mr. Quay had been in conversation) on the scene. Having heard the explanation of the mahout, the conductor decided that the mahout was in fault for not keeping a better lookout, and ordered him to provide the twentieth cake at his own cost. When this was prepared and added to the pile the elephant at once accepted and ate them.

A Blade of Grass.

At a meeting of the Asiatic society of Bengal, at Calcutta, a piece of cable was exhibited, showing that the Indian rubber covering had been pierced by a blade of grass. The piercing was so complete and the contact with the copper core so perfect that "dead earth," as it is technically called, was produced. The species of the grass, owing to its dried-up condition, could not be determined.

A DEADLY TRAP.

Catching a Thief with a Pocket Lined with Fishbones.

They were discussing the best way to bring a prisoner from the place of his arrest to headquarters at the central office not long ago, says the New York Times, and the collar, cuffs, and arm-grips were inspected as manual expedients, and handcuffs, nippers and pocket bludgeons thought as mechanical aids.

"I know," said a detective who had been to Europe and passed some time in the society of London detectives, "how a pickpocket was once arrested without his captor seeing his prisoner's face before he got to the lockup, and without anyone putting a hand on him. It happened this way: A detective who was often detailed to gatherings, weddings, the houses of parliament, Westminster abbey, and other public places, often ran across a wiry little man who he discovered had no business where he was seen, and did nothing for a living."

"Coincidental with the man's visits to crowded places were complaints of larcenies of articles that were carried in the pockets of tails of coats, and especially silk handkerchiefs. The detective suspected the little wiry man, but he evidently had more than one confederate to pass what was stolen so as to be 'clean,' for the officer who was watching him, and who was not noted at reproach from his superiors for his negligence in not discovering the pickpocket, had him arrested twice by other officers and 'shaken down' without finding any stolen goods in his possession."

"Strange officers were used to make the arrests in order that the suspected man might not become familiar with the principal detective's face, as he determined to get him 'by hook or by crook.' Now I don't mean this for a pun, but it came out that way. The detective belonged to one of the many fishing clubs that abound in London, and was familiar with tackle."

"Procuring four dozen unsmelled hooks of the size and strength used here for blackfish, some flax thread and a needle, he passed an afternoon in turning the tail-pockets of an old-fashioned frock coat into a thief-trap. The hooks were ringed and with the needle were sewed bent out just inside the pocket, permitting a hand to enter, but preventing its withdrawal. He knew of a book sale that would be largely attended at the east end of the Strand and made up carefully for it, so that when he left home he was a pleasant-faced old gobbone."

"At the book sale he took care to be as unobtrusive and unobtrusive of his surroundings as possible, but noted the presence of the suspect and waited calmly for a bite. It came. There was a tug at his coat and a bitter oath, and he knew that his man's hand was seized by the hooks, and that he would not venture to risk the agony that tearing away forcibly would inflict. So he said quietly: 'If you follow me our surgeon will relieve you,' and attempted to walk to Scotland Yard, half a mile away, the trapped thief following with his hand in the detective's pocket."

"But such a large crowd gathered that the detective had to take a cab and he landed the man safely in the detective's office. He was held by four of the hooks and the bars had to be cut off before they were extricated. The thief confessed and went to prison for a short term, but the Scotland Yard authorities frowned on the detective's method and prohibited any further experiments of the sort for fear the newspapers would denounce the expedient as cruel. But a deadlier trap could not be baited for a 'cylfakker.'"

NAMES WITH PRESCRIPTIONS.

Druggists Might Save Lives by Insisting on This Simple Precaution.

Said a St. Louis druggist to a Globe-Democrat reporter: "You ask me why I inquired your address when writing out the prescription for your cough. The reason will at once commend itself to every sensible mind, and is simply this: There have been cases innumerable where lives might have been saved had the number of the residence of the party for whom the prescription was put up been known to the druggist. For, as we all know, mistakes are made even in the most reliable drug stores through the carelessness of clerks. Not long ago a druggist found, on returning from supper, that a bottle of strychnine was on the counter and asked the reason why. The clerk replied that he had just been putting up a prescription and he was horrified when he found that he had made use of strychnine instead of some less harmful drug mentioned in the prescription. The frightened young fellow did not even know the name of the person who had come in for it or for whom it was intended, and after hours of search on the part of the distracted druggist the unfortunate victim was traced to his home, but too late, for the first dose had killed him. That is why I press the name of the patient both on the prescription for the druggist and on the stub left in my prescription book."

The Slaves of Chiapas.

A system of peonage, or slavery, is extensively carried on in Chiapas, Mexico, and its workings are novel and interesting as described in the Philadelphia Times. The slaves nearly all come from the middle class of Spaniards, and are not Indians, as is generally supposed. The usual custom is for a family who may have a boy or girl ten or fourteen years of age to take the child to some plantation owner or family of the first class and propose that it shall take a position as servant on condition that an advance of ten or fifteen dollars is made to the parents. The contract also generally stipulates that the child shall receive a certain amount as wages, and the sum shall be placed to its credit until the money advanced has been paid. When the child will again be free. As the child grows older and becomes able to earn more money its parents, so it happens in nearly every case, apply for more money, thus piling up the debt. When the child becomes of age it generally asks for money for its own personal use, and thus bound to its master it must continue in slavery until the debt is paid.

A STUDY IN SOUNDS.

Telegraphers Who Have Not Communicated by the Means of Their Hands.

The telegraph operators of this city are noted the world over as experts, says the Philadelphia Record. Not only are they masters of their art as a class, but many of them have developed the wonderful faculty of reading characters by the sharp ticks that emanate from the little brass instruments. For instance, any old-time operator who ranks as a first-rater can tell by the tick of the machine in Philadelphia what manner of man is at the other end of the wire, no matter whether he be in Chicago, New York or any other distant city. Just as bank cashiers recognize the signatures of old customers, so do telegraphers identify friends by their "sending" or writing.

The fast, jerky sender who stops every few ticks to tighten his screw or loosen that spring or to talk with his despatcher easily tells the receiver that he is a nervous, irresponsible young man of little experience and less judgment; he warns the receiver to be on constant watch for errors, for which he will shrink any responsibility. "Without having definite reason to say so, the receiver will not hesitate to assert that such a sender would lie himself out of any difficulty that might arise."

The fearless, manly telegrapher is the man who sends even, well-paced Morse, fast, of course, but steady without, and sends "all the time." This man seldom has "cases." He impresses the receiver at once that he is invariably correct. He never stops for bad copy, because he always reads a message ahead of the one he is sending, and returns any he cannot decipher to the clerks before starting it. This sort of a man has a friend in every office. All the students and operators in way stations know him. They recognize his sending and appeal to him as would a child to an older brother.

The sneak is quickly discovered and promptly "roasted." He sends slowly and with an aggravating dash. He never swears on the wire, which, by the way, is certain to be rewarded by dismissal if reported. A majority of operators are more or less profane. While this man may not have been in the business at the time of any strike, he is certain to be called a "scab" by all the out-of-town men, with whom he has frequent scraps.

Practical jokers and witty men are generally indifferent operators, but usually have a reputation reaching from San Francisco to Boston, which always secures them work at good salaries. Their characteristics are denoted by the small amount of business they handle, notwithstanding the fact that they seem to work every minute. They make all sorts of blunders and worry the receiver sick, depending upon their good humor and new stories to square matters.

Dude operators, like their fellow brethren, are poor artists, but they are fortunate in acquiring "reputations." They never need tell the receiver that they love dress and think of little else. Their frequent stops and silly chatter between messages tells it for them. After six months working with an operator of this sort the receiver could describe him almost to a positive exactness without ever having seen him or heard him described.

Burly, morose, and tramp operators are alike as to ability. They are all fine telegraphers. Their characters are well defined by silence, and they are distinguished one from the other by bits of information regarding other cities dropped from day to day by the tramps. They tell their story when they correct errors discovered in the addresses of messages relaying from one city to another, and by suggesting some word to take the place of one badly written by some newspaper man whose "copy" they have "handled."

Lady operators are identified by the lightness of their sending, few of them being able to work on long distance wires. On this account "Clara" is a favorite name for light senders of either sex, and their character as well as their sex is revealed by their constant anxiety and overfulness, as well as by their disposition to talk.

Few people understand why telegraphers use so much adverbial variety of slang. This is easily accounted for. The men in New York and San Francisco communicate all the latest phrases to Chicago, from which point Galveston, Denver, New Orleans, and Ogden receive the "new talk," and the forces at Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Richmond and Boston acquire their stock from New York. In this way a bright saying heard by an operator in New York is repeated the world over the same day, as the cable operators are quite as slangy as the rest of the craft.

ABOUT IMAGINATION.

Practical and Opportune Settlement of a Very Abstract Question.

Sitting in a cafe last evening I heard two men discussing the philosophy of imagination, says a writer in the New York Continent. Each was an imaginary master of his own peculiar theory. "I tell you," said one, a venerable-looking gentleman with refined and intelligent features, "imagination is a myth. The word has no basis. It deals in intangible things. It is a monstrosity. The word 'imagination' should be eliminated from the dictionary; it means nothing." "Imagination is idealism," remarked his companion. "It deals in images of the mind. These images are distinct mental shapes; therefore they are things. The world would be a barren place if there were no imagination. Therefore, I say, 'imagination' is a good word. It must remain in any complete dictionary."

The dispute began to wax noisy. Just then the proprietor happened along. His imagination began to work. "I imagine," said he, "that you two have talked enough. Now skip."

The contentious pair moved out. And the champion of imagination, as a significant Anglo-Saxon word, was heard whispering to his companion: "I tell you, imagination is a fact. That man's remark proves it." And his companion simply remarked: "Correct."